

fulness. The church is said to be 850 years old—a low, flat-roofed, windowless stone building. Either it was always partially subterranean, or the earth has accumulated round it, for the floor is three feet below the ground outside. The entrance is by a heavy door two feet six inches high. Inside it is as nearly dark as possible. Two or three circular holes at a great height in the enormously thick wall let in as many glimmers, but artificial light is necessary. There are several small ante-chapels. In two are rude and ancient tombs of ancient bishops, plain blocks of stone, with crosses upon them. In another is a rough desk, covered with candle droppings, on which the *Liturgy of the Apostles* lay open, and on it a cross, which it is the custom to kiss. A fourth is used for the safe keeping of agricultural implements. Two are empty, and one of these serves the useful purpose of a mortuary chapel. The church proper is very small and high. The stone floor has been worn into cavities by the feet of worshippers'; the walls, where not covered with lengths of grimy printed cotton, are black with the candle smoke of ages. The one sign of sacred use is a rude stone screen at the east end, at openings in the front of which the people receive the Eucharist. Behind this is the sanctuary, into which the priest alone, and he fasting, may enter. Old brass lamps and candelabra, incrustated with blackened tallow, hang from the roof, and strings of little bells from wall to

wall, which  
are plucked by each recipient of the sacred  
elements as  
he returns to his "stand."

In this gloomy vault-like building prayers  
are said, as  
in all Nestorian churches, at sunrise and  
sunset by the  
priest in his ordinary clothing, the villagers  
being summoned by the beating of a mallet on a  
board.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Cutts, in his interesting volume, *Christians Under  
the Crescent in  
Asia*, gives the following translation of one of the morning  
praises, which